

Colorado State Housing Board Policy

October 3, 2007

Visitability of Housing for Persons with Disabilities

The Colorado State Housing Board and Division of Housing believe that visitability it is in the public interest to support those projects which can accommodate persons with varying degrees of physical abilities. As the Board is charged under State Statute 24-32-707 to make recommendations on grant awards to private enterprise and all public and private agencies for the construction and acquisition of adequate affordable housing in Colorado, the State Housing Board finds that:

Whereas:

Homes built with visitable features enhance livability for disabled residents, and often allow non-disabled residents to remain in their homes as they age, reducing the cost of retrofit of the dwelling. In addition, a visitable home allows residents to more easily welcome guests of all abilities into their home.

The Colorado Division of Housing encourages all applicants for grant and loan funds to incorporate the following Visitability Design Features into their proposed affordable housing projects. To be the most cost effective, DOH requires applicants to consider visitable features during the earliest stages of new project design, starting with site planning. For rehabilitation projects, incorporating all visitability standards may not always be either financially or physically feasible, but some visitable features may still be incorporated. Applicants may also choose to make their units easily adaptable to these standards. Adaptable dwelling units are pre-engineered to accommodate, at a commercial cost, all of the following exterior and interior visitable features.

Incorporation of Visitability Design Features within a proposed project does not in and of itself assure approval of that application. It may, at the discretion of DOH staff and the State Housing Board, increase the potential funding for that application.

VISITABILITY DESIGN FEATURES

Visitable dwelling units have the following exterior features:

1. At least one step-free or accessible entrance.
2. Located on an accessible route that complies with ANSI A117.1-1998, section 4.8
3. Building lot that has a maximum slope not to exceed 1:12.
4. Building and unit entrance doors with a minimum net clear opening of thirty-two (32) inches when the door is open ninety (90) degrees, as measured between the face of the door and the opposite stop.

Visitable dwelling units also have the following interior features:

1. All interior doors on the accessible floor level that are intended for user passage provide a minimum net clear opening of thirty-two (32) inches when the door is open ninety (90) degrees, as measured between the face of the door and the opposite stop.
2. Interior sliding or pocket doors on the accessible floor level provide a minimum net clear opening of thirty-two (32) inches, as measured when the door is fully open.
3. All interior doors on the accessible floor level are equipped with levered hardware; and there are ramped or beveled changes at door thresholds if there is a change in floor level.
4. All interior hallways on the accessible floor level have a minimum width of not less than thirty-two (32) inches and do not have stairs.
5. The accessible floor level has a minimum of one (1) bathroom, with a toilet and sink, which is:
 - a. Designed and constructed so those with assistive devices can enter and close the door behind them.
 - b. Constructed with wood blocking installed flush within wall framing to support grab bars at a height of thirty-three (33) to thirty-six (36) inches above the finish floor and adjacent to the toilet, shower stall, and bathtub.